

Workgroup on Libraries & Access to Justice.
Minutes of the
Workgroup on Libraries & Access to Justice
April 20, 2021, 2:00 p.m.
Convened Virtually through Microsoft Teams

Members in attendance: Atty. Jeffrey J. Dowd, Ms. Dawn La Valle, Co-Chairs; Ms. Heather Collins, Ms. Ann H. Doherty, Ms. Kate Frank, Mr. Christopher M. Roy, Atty. Anne Rajotte

Members absent: Atty. Jamey Bell, Atty. Jan Chiaretto, Ms. Melissa Canham-Clyne, Atty. Tais C. Ericson, Mr. Robert D. Farwell, Atty. Patricia Cruz Fragoso, Atty. Alexandra Gillett, Atty. Cheryl Halford, Ms. Krista Hess

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

Jeff Dowd, Co-Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed members.

I. Review and approval of draft minutes – January 11, 2021

Approval of the minutes of the January 11, 2021 meeting of the Workgroup on Libraries & Access to Justice was tabled due to the lack of a quorum. The approval vote will be conducted at the time of the next scheduled meeting.

II. ADA Quick Card

Heather Collins, Judicial Branch, ADA Unit, reviewed the content and format of the ADA quick card that she drafted. Heather reported that the draft document combines FAQs, bullets, and short narratives focusing on ADA accommodations and processes available to individuals accessing the Judicial Branch courthouses. The quick card was drafted with guidance and suggestions provided by Dawn La Valle and Maria Bernier of the Connecticut State Library. Jeff asked Heather if the draft needed to be reviewed for approval by any administrative office. Heather stated that the material was reviewed by Branch ADA administrators and by the Office of Legal Services. Heather asked if the approval of the Access to Justice Commission was needed. Dawn stated that it is extremely helpful to have the awareness and approval of the larger organization. Jeff asked about possible print distribution of the card and the posting of the PDF version of the card on the Judicial Branch web page. Later in the meeting Jeff stated he will check on the date for the next Access to Justice Commission meeting and if a date is not set, he will ask Krista to submit the ADA card to the Committee for approval.

III. Review of current Workgroup initiatives

a. Legal Research – Public Librarians

Chris Roy, and Anne Rajotte reported that the “Hands on Legal Research” program, which in the past provided in-person instruction to public librarians, has been successfully converted to an online format. The program will be hosted by the Connecticut State Library on Zoom and is scheduled for Wednesday, April 28, 2021, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Chris stated that since the program is now able to be conducted remotely, less time is needed for travel and setup, so he is hopeful that the program will be offered more frequently. Dawn commented that having virtual programs is incredibly helpful – no travel time for staff which reduces the time away from the library. Jeff asked if “breakout rooms” were integrated into the program. Chris and Anne said working with “breakout rooms” is challenging but they rehearsed using breakout rooms so that the programs would run smoothly.

b. Legal Corner

Jeff reported that since the last meeting, he received suggestions from Workgroup members for links to be included on a web page that would provide links to information and resources to assist self-represented individuals. The page is accessible from a “Public” tab on the [Judicial Branch homepage](#). Once an email is sent to the Conntech listserv Public librarians will then be able to create a shortcut to the page from patron computers. Jeff also reported that a matrix displaying law-related services available to the public is being drafted. The matrix would provide a quick scan reference grid for matching services, needs, and providers. Workgroup members discussed services available and suggestions for the “Services” header labels. It was suggested that perhaps short bullets, anchored below the grid, explaining each service, might be a helpful addition.

c. Audio PSA

This project continues to be on pause until recording can be undertaken in an environment that is safe and conducive to producing a radio quality recording.

d. Speakers Bureau – update

Jeff reported that a checkbox has been added to the Speaker’s Bureau (Employee) brochure to indicate, if checked, that the request is for a “remote” presentation. The updated form is now available from the Judicial Branch Speaker’s Bureau page. An additional access point to the brochure is now posted on the Law Library Services’ “For Librarians” web page.

VI. Survey of Public Librarians

Jeff introduced a discussion about the Workgroup conducting a survey of the public librarians. The members discussed how to focus the survey. Dawn stated that it was important to base the survey on what the Workgroup wants to accomplish, keeping in mind core items, such as audience, desired goals, needed legal information. It was decided to send the results of the public librarian survey conducted in 2014 to Workgroup members for review to assist in the planning of the next survey.

VII. New Items

No new business was introduced.

VIII. Next meeting

The date of the next meeting is to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.